

Message Text

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13

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 IO-13

OMB-01 RSR-01 /098 W

----- 105318

R 310754Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9829

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

UYKIHN USUN 1219

CINCPAC

UNCLAS SEOUL 5868

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, KS, KN

SUBJ: ROK REACTIONS TO COORDINATING COMMITTEE

CONTROVERSY

REF: SEOUL 5841

1. SPATE OF NEWSPAPER AND TELEVISION COMMENTARY ON COORDINATING COMMITTEE CONTROVERSY CONTINUED AUGUST 31. MEDIA COMMENTATORS VIEWED NORTH'S ACTION AS (A) A DESPERATE REACTION TO RECENT ROK FOREIGN POLICY TRIUMPHS; (B) A MANEUVER TO SHOREUP NORTH'S POSITION IN UNGA DEBATE; AND (C) AN ATTEMPT TO "GET" YI HU-RAK. SOME COMMENTATORS ASSERTED THAT NORTH WAS NEVER COMFORTABLE WITH DIALOGUE BUT NEEDED A PRETEXT TO BACK OUT, WHILE OTHERS SAW A GOOD POSSIBILITY THAT DIALOGUE WOULD RESUME AFTER UNGA SESSION. ALL SAW A LONG ROAD AHEAD.

2. IN ADDITION TO MEDIA COMMENTATORS, AUGUST 31 NEWSPAPERS CARRIED STATEMENTS BY ASSORTED CIVIC AND SOCIAL LEADERS MAKING THE SAME POINTS.

3. PRESS REPORTED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER KIM YONG-SHIK
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TOLD UNCURK MEETING AUGUST 30 THAT HE DID NOT VIEW RECENT

EXCHANGE OVER COORDINATING COMMITTEE AS EITHER INTERRUPTING OR DESTROYING THE SOUTH-NORTH DIALOGUE. HE WAS QUOTED AS SAYING ROKG WOULD WORK WITH PATIENCE AND SINCERITY TO ADVANCE THE DIALOGUE.

4. OTHER NEWS REPORTS FOCUSED ON STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT DESCRIBING SOUTH-NORTH CONTACTS AS THE BEST HOPE FOR REDUCING TENSIONS AND IMPROVING THE WELFARE OF ALL KOREANS, NORTH AND SOUTH. PRESS ALSO CARRIED ORIENT PRESS REPORT THAT AMBASSADOR KIM MET UNDERSECRETARY PORTER AUGUST 29 FOR TWENTY MINUTES AND DISCUSSED (A) RECENT NORTH KOREAN ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE ROK AND SEOUL'S RESPONSE; (B) MEASURES FOR DEALING WITH THE KOREAN QUESTION IN THE UN; AND (C) U.S. SUPPORT FOR THE ROKG'S JUNE 23 FOREIGN POLICY STATEMENT.
ADLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SEOUL05868
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SEOUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973082/aaaaabge.tel
Line Count: 77
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: SEOUL 5841
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: martinjw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13-Dec-2001 by reddocgw>; APPROVED <05-Feb-2002 by martinjw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ROK REACTIONS TO COORDINATING COMMITTEE CONTROVERSY
TAGS: ALOW, PINT, KS, KN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005